

### TRIBUTE TO FORMER SENATOR WILLIAM PROXMIRE

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to our late colleague, Senator William Proxmire—beloved father, husband, veteran, and former member of this body. With over 32 years of service in this institution, Senator Proxmire constantly challenged us to remain fiscally responsible. As chairman of the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs for four Congresses, he was constantly working to protect the taxpayers.

Most Members of this esteemed body recall the steady reminder by Senator Proxmire that “Uncle Sam is the last of the big spenders.” His firm advocacy for good sense and forethought on spending led to the creation of the “Golden Fleece” awards. Senator Proxmire would hand these awards out, to friend and foe, to highlight government waste, abuse and scandal. His “maverick” attitude toward our responsibilities with the taxpayers’ dollars should be remembered, honored, and, as I am sure he would agree, employed more today. We miss Senator Proxmire and his “Golden Fleece” awards.

Our country lost Senator Proxmire this past December as he succumbed to the devastating affects of Alzheimer’s—a disease he battled daily since 1994. He spent his last years at the Copper Ridge Institute in Eldersburg, MD. Copper Ridge is a fantastic facility dedicated to the study of caring for those suffering from dementia. The goals of the Copper Ridge Institute are to share the knowledge it has acquired in the field of dementia care. For the last 10 years, staff from Copper Ridge, the Copper Ridge Institute and the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine have worked together to develop a model of care that respects the dignity of the people battling this disease and that provides a better quality of life to them.

I had the pleasure of meeting and talking with Senator Proxmire’s wife, Ellen, in September 2004. Mrs. Proxmire sponsors an annual award in the name of her husband for those who support this dedicated Alzheimer’s research. Mrs. Proxmire has truly become the voice for those who cannot speak. She has worked diligently to see more national attention given to Alzheimer’s disease and the important role specific care models like that at Copper Ridge play in preserving the dignity and quality of life of those with the disease. As Mrs. Proxmire likes to point out, “Until there is a cure for the disease, learning to care for those with Alzheimer’s is paramount.”

Mr. President, we have a responsibility, as nearly 4.5 million Americans find themselves faced with this terrible disease, to work with those involved with research and medicine in this field. Our country is stronger today because the name “William Proxmire” is found on the rolls of the Senate. As we pause to remember this great man,

true patriot, and fellow Senator, this institution should take heed and continue our support in the fight for an Alzheimer’s cure.

### PALESTINIAN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, while we are still awaiting final certification of the election results, it is apparent that the Islamic Resistance Movement, or Hamas, has obtained a significant number of seats in the new Palestinian legislative council. Despite its electoral success, Hamas remains a terrorist organization that has refused to renounce its fundamental commitment to the destruction of Israel and to the use of violence to achieve its goals.

Electoral results do not change the fact that a lasting, viable peace can only be obtained through a two-state solution. Hamas must use its electoral success as an opportunity to renounce its violent platform and to join in a coalition dedicated to achieving peace in the region. Renouncing terrorism and violence and accepting the right of Israel to exist are essential steps toward fulfilling the desire of the Palestinian people for a peaceful representative democracy.

### NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am pleased to join my colleagues Senator MCCAIN and Senator KENNEDY in sponsoring a resolution designating the month of January as “National Mentoring Month.” Adult-to-youth mentoring has long shown positive impacts on our Nation’s young people in becoming responsible, productive adults.

This January will mark the fourth anniversary of the National Mentoring Month campaign to focus national attention on the need for mentors, as well as how each of us within the public and private sector can work together to increase the number of mentors and assure brighter futures for our youth.

Currently, it is estimated that 15 million children need or want a mentor. That is 15 million young people who need the guidance to improve life-essential skills, make healthy choices, and increase their own self worth. I hope the rest of the Senate will join in supporting this resolution and supporting this very important campaign.

### ABRAMOFF SCANDAL

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, as both vice chairman of the Senate Ethics Committee and a member of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, I have been absolutely appalled at the scope and the depth of the villainy associated with the Abramoff lobbying scandal.

Inasmuch as Washington recently has become consumed and distracted by the utterly shameful actions of dis-

graced lobbyist Jack Abramoff, I believe that it is essential to understand just how far removed from this scandal Indian tribes are. While a small handful of tribes were represented by Mr. Abramoff and were victimized by his incredibly shady and cynical manipulation of their funds, the vast majority of our Nation’s 560 tribes and Alaskan Native villages had nothing to do with him or his practices. Less than half of those tribes operate casinos, and only a tiny proportion of those generate the kind of money that would attract the likes of Mr. Abramoff.

Most of the tribes that operate casinos are far from wealthy. The myth that all or most gaming Indian tribes are rolling in dough is wildly incorrect. The tribes in South Dakota and many around the country have large land bases and extensive enrolled memberships. Their casinos are often located in remote, rural areas far away from large numbers of affluent customers and set amidst dire levels of poverty and unemployment. The truth is that most of these casinos provide some badly needed jobs and only a modest amount of revenue. The income that remains after payroll expenses are largely then immediately consumed by a huge backlog of financial needs for education, housing, health and economic development within their reservations.

While a few Indian tribes were associated with Mr. Abramoff, the fees they paid were far beyond what most tribes could possibly afford—and in the end, their hired lobbyist abused both their money and their trust. Clearly, this scandal was a lobbying scandal, not a tribal scandal. The reality in too much of Indian Country is the consequence of chronic poverty: shocking levels of disease, inadequate housing, crime, drug and alcohol abuse, low school graduation rates, hunger, and stressed families. These tribes aren’t paying Washington lobbyists millions of dollars, but instead are struggling every day to make ends meet and to help restore the dignity of their members.

While I did not receive any money from Jack Abramoff, I did receive legal contributions from tribes he represented. I am proud of the support Indian tribes and individual Native Americans have extended to me over the years. We must help restore the American public’s faith in good, responsible government and preserve participation by sovereign Indian tribes in our democracy.

### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

#### CONGRATULATING EAGLE SCOUTS

• Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I rise to congratulate Seth Honerman, Robert Viste, Kevin and Kyle Roades, Dennis VerHey, Donald Nordlie, Adam English, Michael King, Jordan Richter, Bayard Carlson, Ryan King, Thomas Hieber, Jeffrey Wilkes, and Travis